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#262

THE GATHERING OF FIVE
PART FOUR

THE SPECTACULAR

SPIDER-MAN®

THIS ISSUE:
CHOICES--

--THAT WILL CHANGE THEIR LIVES FOREVER!

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MACKIE

FELCHLE

HANNA

FIRST INTERLUDE

THE STORM STALKS DOWN THE JERSEY HEIGHTS ON FLICKERING LEGS OF LIGHTNING.

IT HAS BEEN THREE DAYS COMING, THE WORST IN A SUMMER OF BAD STORMS.

I DON'T NEED EXCUSES, FRANKLIN!

BUT A STORM WHICH IS AS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE FURIES AND RAGE IN THE HEART OF ONE MAN.

YOU PROMISED ME DELIVERY BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT.

I'M SURE I DO NOT HAVE TO REMIND YOU OF THE CONSEQUENCES SHOULD YOU FAIL TO LIVE UP TO THAT PROMISE?

A MAN NAMED NORMAN OSBORN.

I DON'T WANT EXCUSES, FRANKLIN.

YOU AGREED TO THE PROPOSAL AS STATED. IT IS FAR TOO LATE IN THE GAME TO BE ASKING FOR MODIFICATIONS.

MIDNIGHT. NOT A SECOND LATER.

INTIMIDATION WILL NOT WORK, OSBORN.

ALL FIVE MUST COME OF THEIR OWN FREE WILL, OR...

I KNOW THAT, MAXWELL. I'LL THANK YOU TO STOP YOUR CONSTANT REMINDERS.

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FRANKLIN IS A *FOOL.* AND *FOOLS* DO AS THEY ARE *TOLD.*

IT IS *QUIBBLING* TO *DEBATE* IF SUCH *OBEDIENCE* IS TRULY *VOLUNTARY.*

"I WILL NOT LET SUCH *DETAILS* STOP ME NOW!"

ONE MINUTE AGO...

YES...YES. ALL RIGHT, OSBORN. I'LL *BE* THERE BY MIDNIGHT.

BUT I'LL FIND A WAY TO MAKE YOU *PAY,* OSBORN.

AND PAY *DEARLY!*

I *PROMISE* YOU *THAT!*

GEEZ, *DAD...*

...YOU ARE *SUCH* A *WUSS!*

END OF FIRST INTERLUDE

SPECTACULAR Stan Lee presents SPIDER-MAN

A DAY IN THE LIFE

TWELVE HOURS LATER...

...NEW YORK, NEW YORK, ON A SWELTERING SUMMER AFTERNOON.

IT'S A CITY FAMOUS FOR BUSTLE, FOR NONSTOP ACTIVITY. THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS.

AND, TRUTH TO TELL, MOST OF ITS INHABITANTS HAVE GROWN SO USED TO LIVING WITHIN ITS EVER-BUZZING HIVE THAT THEY PAY SCANT ATTENTION TO THE DANGERS THAT LURK IN SHADOWS.

AND SOMETIMES IN BROAD DAYLIGHT.

HEY! LOOK WHERE YER GOIN', YA IDJITS!

NE WAY

WATCH OUT!

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THOUGH IT IS TRUE MOST NEW YORKERS HAVE COME TO EXPECT ANY THREAT TO LIFE AND LIMB TO COME FROM LESS MUNDANE SOURCES.

MUGGERS. TERRORISTS. THE LATEST MARAUDING SUPER-VILLAIN.

GET OUTTA THE WAY! GET OUTTA THE WAY!

HURRY UP, MIKEY! CAROL WILL SKIN US IF WE'RE LATE!

NOT FROM A PAIR OF SELF-CENTERED FOOLS IN THE MOST TRENDY SPANDEX THEIR CREDIT CARDS COULD AFFORD.

HEY! I TOLD HER WE MIGHT BE A COUPLE OF MINUTES LATE, BRAD-BOY!

SURE! LIKE THAT'S EVER WORKED!

A PAIR WHO ARE ABOUT TO HAVE THEIR PLANS FOR THE DAY MODIFIED IN AN UNEXPECTED FASHION.

HOLY COW! LOOK!

SPIDER-MAN!

I NEVER SAW HIM IN PERSON BEFORE!

THIS IS TOO COOL! WE GOTTA FOLLOW HIM!

ARE YOU NUTS?! CAROL WILL KILL US!

Ah, **NUTS** TO HER! THE **WORST** SHE CAN DO IS THROW A **HISSY FIT!**

EASY FOR **YOU** TO SAY, MIKEY! YOU'RE NOT THE ONE **ENGAGED** TO HER!

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. BUT HOW MANY TIMES DO WE GET TO SEE SPIDER-MAN IN **ACTION?**

HE COULD BE ON HIS WAY TO FIGHT **DOCTOR DOOM** OR SOMEBODY!

BETTER **HIM** THAN CAROL WITH HER PANTY-HOSE IN A **KNOT!**

HE'S **STOPPING!**

LOOK AT HIM **STICK** TO THAT **WALL!**

THAT MUST BE SO **GROSS!** TO HAVE, LIKE, **GLUE** ON YOUR **FINGERS** ALL THE TIME!

YOU **CHUMP!** ONLY AN **IDIOT** WOULD THINK HE HAD **STICKY FINGERS.**

HE'S GOT, LIKE, SOME KIND OF **NATURAL VELCRO.** LIKE **SPIDERS** HAVE!

OW!

LOOK! HE'S COMING DOWN THE WALL! WHAT'S HE **UP** TO?

HE'S CRAWLED DOWN TO THE DOOR OF THAT *BODEGA.*

Oh, MAN! DON'T TELL ME WE *CHASED* HIM FOR *FIVE BLOCKS* JUST TO SEE HIM *BUY LUNCH?!*

WELL... THAT'S KINDA *COOL,* TOO!

MAYBE WE CAN BUY HIM A *COKE!*

HEY, YA THINK? THAT WOULD BE SO...

YIKES!!

I *THOUGHT* IT WAS A BIT *WARM* FOR THAT *HAT!*

KEEP AWAY FROM ME, YA SLIMY *FREAK!*

I'LL BLOW YER BLASTED *HEAD* OFF!

NICE TALK!

YOU GONNA START WAVING *GUNS* AROUND, SNACKY...

...MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT UP AGAINST SOMEONE WITH THE *SPEED* OF A *SPIDER.*

NOT TO MENTION HIS *PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH!*

UNGH!

HEY, WASSUP, PUNK?

DON'T YOU WANT TO *PLAY* ANYMORE?

GEEZ, YOU'RE JUST *NO FUN* ALL OF A SUDDEN!

OKAY, FINE! I GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN HANG AROUND PLAYING PATTYCAKE WITH *YOU!*

THIS *WEBBING* WILL *DISSOLVE* IN ABOUT AN *HOUR*, BY WHICH TIME THE *COPS* SHOULD HAVE ARRIVED!

THANK YOU, SIR! THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!

HEY, NO BIG DEAL, FRIEND!

THIS IS SO *AMAZING!* WAIT UNTIL I TELL *GUPTA* I WAS SAVED BY *CAPTAIN AMERICA!*

GLEEP!

AND, YOU KNOW, A *WEEK* FROM NOW, PEOPLE WILL BE WONDERING WHY *CAP* IS USING *SPIDER WEBS!*

NO ONE WILL EVEN *THINK* IT *MIGHT* HAVE BEEN *ME!*

HE'S LEAVING! COME ON!

SECOND INTERLUDE

ACROSS TOWN FROM SPIDER-MAN AND HIS ADMIRERS, MARY JANE WATSON PARKER FINDS HERSELF USHERED INTO A WORLD AT ONCE STRANGE AND STRANGELY FAMILIAR.

THIS IS IT, MJ! FROM RIGHT NOW, YOUR WHOLE LIFE CHANGES FOR THE BETTER!

MY LIFE HASN'T BEEN ALL THAT BAD, RYAN!

HI THERE. RYAN SAWYER TO SEE VERONICA STAHL...

SURE. DO YOU HAVE AN APPOINTMENT?

OF COURSE. THIS IS MARY JANE WATSON. Ms. STAHL HAS...

MARY JANE WATSON?!

OMIGOSH! WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO? Ms. STAHL! Ms. STAHL! MARY JANE WATSON IS HERE!

FABULOUS!

MARY JANE! DARLING!

IT IS SO ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS TO MEET YOU AT LAST!

BEAUTIFUL!

ABSOLUTELY!

PERFECT!

MY DEAR, YOU LOOK *AMAZING!* NOT A *DAY* OLDER THAN YOUR LAST *PHOTOS!*

WELL... THANKS. BUT I'M NOT *THAT* MUCH OLDER...!

AMAZING! NOT A *DAY!*

INCREDIBLE!

HOW DOES SHE *DO* IT?

OF *COURSE* YOU'RE NOT, MY DEAR! OF *COURSE* YOU'RE NOT!

TO THINK!

YEARS OUT OF THE BIZ! AND A BABY!

YET LOOK AT HER! *FABULOUS!*

BUT YOU'D UNDERSTAND WHY I'D EXPECT SOME *DETERIORATION,* NO? A FEW YEARS *OUT* OF THE *BIZ* -- A *BABY...*

THE BABY...

Oh, YES...I'M SORRY. THAT WAS *THOUGHTLESS* OF ME, WASN'T IT?

NOT ANOTHER *WORD!*

TROUBLES ALL BEHIND YOU NOW, DEAR. ALL BEHIND YOU.

YOUR *JOAN HANCOCK* ON THE *DOTTED LINE,* AND YOU'LL HAVE YOURSELF A *CONTRACT* THAT WILL MAKE *ELLE* AND *CINDY* AND *NAOMI* AND *CHRISTIE* TURN AS *GREEN* AS *BRUCE BANNER* ON A *BAD HAIR DAY!*

THAT *IS* THE *FIGURE* RYAN SAWYER QUOTED YOU, YES?

YES...YES IT *IS...!*

AND AS MARY JANE PUTS PEN TO THIS MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF PAPER...

...ACROSS TOWN, A PURSUIT CONTINUES.

HE'S SWINGING FASTER AND FASTER!

IF HE GETS OUT OF SIGHT, WE MAY LOSE HIM!

WALK

WELL, THE WRONG GUY MAY END UP GETTING THE CREDIT FOR MY LITTLE GOOD DEED...

...BUT I GUESS I STILL GET THE WARM AND FUZZY FEELING THAT GOES WITH IT!

FUNNY -- SOMETIMES I GET SO WRAPPED UP FIGHTING THE BIG GUNS LIKE DOC OCK OR THE GOBLIN AND ALL HIS IMITATORS...

...I FORGET SOMEONE WITH POWERS LIKE MINE CAN BE A LOT OF USE JUST AT STREET LEVEL.

LIKE, FOR INSTANCE...

THAT'S NOT FAIR! THAT'S OUR BALL!

DROP DEAD, PUNK!

WE'RE PLAYING WITH IT NOW!

SOMEONE OUGHTA CALL A *COP!*

WE CAN'T DO *THAT!* THEY'LL *KILL* US IF WE DO THAT!

LOOK OUT! *MICHAEL JORDAN* MAKES HIS *MOVE* FOR THE *BASKET...*

HE'S IN POSITION!

HE *SHOOTS...*

THWIPP

HOLY...!

SPIDER-MAN!

AS IN *"FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD,"* KIDS.

SO, YOU THINK YOU'RE PRETTY HOT STUFF WITH A BASKETBALL, Huh, KID?

THINK YOU'RE HOT ENOUGH TO BEAT *ME?*

S-SURE! IF YOU STAY ON THE *GROUND!*

YOU GOT MY *WORD* ON THAT, JUNIOR.

NOW, *COME ONE!* SHOW ME SOMETHING!

GET HIM! *GET* THE BALL!

HE'S TOO *FAST!* HE MUST BE USIN' HIS *SPIDER-SPEED!*

GIMME A *BREAK,* LOSER!

THE DAY I NEED MY SPIDER POWERS TO BEAT THE LIKES OF *YOU...*

... IS THE DAY I HAVE TO *TURN IN* MY *SUPER HERO UNION CARD!*

TWO POINTS TO ME!

WANNA *QUIT* WHILE YOU'RE *BEHIND?*

WE AIN'T BEAT YET, FREAK!

NICE MOVE, CURTIS! NOW...

WHATCHA GOT, KIDDO? DIAPER RASH? COOTIES?

... I GOT...

... IT..?

HOW ABOUT A *NEW OUTLOOK?*

A SUDDEN *NEED* TO *DO* THE *RIGHT THING?*

GOTTA BE GENTLE. JUST TAKE THE WIND OUT OF HIM.

ANYONE *ELSE* WANNA TRY TO TAKE THE BALL AWAY FROM ME?

N-NOT ME..!

HOWIE... ARE YOU *OKAY?*

YEAH -- JUST SHAKEN UP!

NOTHING WRONG WITH HIM THAT A GOOD DOSE OF *COMMON SENSE* WOULDN'T *FIX!*

HERE! TAKE HIM *HOME* TO HIS *MAMA!*

AND, HERE... YOU KIDS CAN *FINISH* YOUR *GAME* NOW...

WOW!

THANKS, SPIDEY!

AND *REMEMBER,* YOU PUNKS...

DON'T TRY ANY MORE *ROUGH STUFF* WITH YOUNGER KIDS! I'LL BE WATCHING YOU WITH MY *SPIDER-VISION.*

Y-YESSIR, Mr. SPIDER-MAN, SIR!

AND NOW, UP *UP* AND *OUTTA HERE!*

"SPIDER-VISION"!!

MAN, SOMETIMES I JUST *SLAY* MYSELF! I MAY'VE BEEN JUST A TAD ROUGH, BUT THEY NEEDED A LESSON ABOUT PICKING ON SMALLER KIDS.

HE'S ON THE *MOVE* AGAIN!

AFTER HIM!

FASTER! IF HE GETS AROUND THAT CORNER BEFORE WE CATCH UP, WE MAY *LOSE* HIM!

WHICH MIGHT NOT BE SUCH A *BAD* IDEA, RIGHT ABOUT NOW!

CINE II

Huh? HEY, MAN, IT WAS *YOUR IDEA* TO *FOLLOW* HIM IN THE *FIRST PLACE!*

I KNOW, I KNOW. BUT THIS IS SO *BORING!*

MAYBE WE *SHOULD* JUST GO MEET *CAROL!*

I WAS HOPING BY NOW HE WOULD HAVE CAUGHT UP TO *DOCTOR OCTOPUS* OR THE *HOBGOBLIN* OR EVEN SOME OTHER *SUPER HERO*, LIKE THE *HUMAN TORCH* OR SOMEBODY!

WE COULD HAVE WATCHED *COPS* DOING WHAT HE'S BEEN DOING!

IF SHE'S STILL *WAITING!* Oh, MAN, I AM GONNA BE IN SO MUCH...

... TROUBLE ...

OH, MAN! OH, MAN! OH MAN OH MAN OH MAN!

GO! GO! GO!

WE GOTTA GET *OUTTA* HERE BEFORE SOMEBODY CALLS THE *COPS!*

IS ANYONE AFTER US?

NO. THEY'RE ALL STAYING AT THE... AT THE...

THE TERM YOU'RE *LOOKING* FOR...

... IS *"THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT."*

AND, IN CASE YOU HADN'T *HEARD*...

... IT'S *ILLEGAL* TO *LEAVE* ONE OF *THOSE.*

WE DIDN'T MEAN IT! WE DIDN'T MEAN IT!

Oh, NO! Oh, NO, NO, NO!

ESPECIALLY IF IT WAS *YOUR FAULT.*

MIKEY! MIKEY! DON'T *LEAVE* ME!

SAVE YOUR *BREATH,* DOPE.

HE'S ABOUT AS *WORRIED* ABOUT *YOU* AS *YOU* WERE ABOUT THE *PEOPLE* IN THAT *CAR!*

Oh! I'M *LOOSE!*

TELL IT TO THE *JUDGE,* PALLY!

THE *LEAST* YOU COULD HAVE DONE WAS STICK AROUND TO SEE IF ANYONE WAS *HURT!* OR USED YOUR *CELL PHONES* TO CALL *911!*

IMAGINE WHAT *GREAT* SUPER HEROES *YOU'D* BOTH MAKE!

SELF-CENTERED MAN AND THE *LIVING LOSER!*

IT JUST MAKES MY *HEART SWELL* TO SEE SUCH *STERLING EXAMPLES* OF YOUNG *MANHOOD* ABROAD IN THE *CITY!*

NO! NO! WE DIDN'T *MEAN* ANYTHING!

YOU'RE *RIGHT*, FRIEND. YOU AND YOUR LITTLE *BUDDY* DON'T MEAN *SQUAT!*

NOW, LET'S TAKE YOU *BACK* TO SEE IF THE *COPS* HAVE ARRIVED YET, SHALL WE?

NO! *PLEASE!*

WE'RE BOTH LAWYERS WITH *RAMSEY, WINGET* AND *CALHOUN!*

IF THIS GOES TO *COURT* WE COULD *LOSE* OUR *JOBS!*

YER BREAKIN' MY *HEART!*

LOOKS LIKE THE COPS ARE HERE...

HEY, LOOK! SPIDER-MAN!

AND *THOSE* ARE THE *GUYS* WHO *CAUSED* THE *ACCIDENT!*

THAT RIGHT, WALL-CRAWLER? THESE THE IDIOT BICYCLISTS WHO CAUSED THIS?

NONE OTHER, OFFICER.

DO ME A FAVOR AND FIND THE ***BIGGEST BOOK*** YOU'VE GOT TO ***THROW*** AT 'EM, WOULDJA?

WILL DO, SPIDEY! THANKS!

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK, OFFICER! ALL IN A DAY'S WORK!

AND ALL I NEED NOW IS TO GET ***HOME*** WITHOUT SOME SUPERPUNK WITH A ***BAD ATTITUDE*** DECIDING TO MAKE HIS ***NAME*** BY USING ME FOR A ***PUNCHING BAG...***

...AND I CAN MARK THIS DAY IN MY ***DIARY*** AS JUST ABOUT ***PERFECT!***

NO, JANINE, NOT A ***SIGN!*** NOT A ***WORD!*** AND NEITHER OF THEM IS ANSWERING HIS ***PHONE!***

I'M TELLING YOU -- ***BRAD*** BETTER HAVE THE ***BEST EXCUSE EVER*** FOR ***THIS ONE!***

THIRD INTERLUDE

LAGUARDIA AIRPORT, IN THE BOROUGH OF QUEENS, NEW YORK.

TWELVE HOURS AGO.

PASSENGERS ON VENTURE FLIGHT 807 ARE NOW DEPLANING AT GATE FOUR.

CLEARLY I CANNOT HOLD *FRANKLIN* RESPONSIBLE FOR THE *WEATHER.*

BUT HE WAS *DUE* OVER *FOUR HOURS* AGO...

...AND I WILL *FIND* A *WAY* TO MAKE HIM *PAY* FOR THIS *FRUSTRATION.*

VENTURE AIRWAYS APOLOGIZES FOR THE DELAY AND WISHES ALL ITS PASSENGERS A PLEASANT STAY IN NEW YORK.

FINALLY! I WAS BEGINNING TO BELIEVE THIS BLASTED *STORM* WOULD *NEVER* LET THEM *LAND!*

THIS IS THE *GATE.* BUT, WHERE...?

YOU! YOU ARE THE *LAST* OF THE *PASSENGERS?* IS THERE ANYONE *LEFT* ON THE *PLANE?*

OW! LEGGO MY ARM!

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU *ARE?*

AMONG OTHER THINGS, I HAPPEN TO BE A ***MAJORITY STOCKHOLDER*** IN THIS AIR-LINE, AND THEREFORE YOUR ***EMPLOYER***, YOUNG WOMAN.

NOW, ***ANSWER*** THE ***QUESTION.***

NO...THERE'S NO ONE LEFT ON THE PLANE. THEY'RE ALL ***OFF.***

WHERE ***IS*** HE! HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ***ON*** THIS ***FLIGHT.***

IF THIS IS SOME STUPID ***DELAYING TACTIC...***

DON'T HAVE ***KITTENS,*** OSBORN.

I'VE ***BROUGHT*** WHAT YOU ***NEED.***

IT ***CAN'T*** BE!

NOT ***YOU!***

NEXT! OUR TALE CONTINUES IN THE PAGES OF SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN #33! AS MORE SECRETS ARE REVEALED AND THE GREATEST THREAT OUR HERO HAS EVER FACED APPROACHES! BE THERE!